

Dec 2. 1810 THE 1507/1427
CAUSE

OF THE LATE
DISPUTE

BETWEEN

Doctor FARMER
AND

Doctor BLAIR,

Laid open to the PUBLICK.



G O R K E:
Printed by GEORGE HARRISON.
MDCCL.



I Make no doubt, but Readers are; by this Time tired of Controversies; none can be more tired of those I have had any share in, than I am: but a continued Persecution, will excuse a continued Defence, and sure no Part, can be more Vexatious and Troublesome, than that Part, which has been put upon me, by Calumnies, and gross Misrepresentations, and last of all by an Attempt, against which I can have no Protection but the Laws. Dr. Farmer cannot expect that I should now enter into the Merits of such an Affair: But as he, in order to excuse his late Behaviour. has urged the Provocation I gave him; I think I may be heard with Patience, when I explain to the Publick, what this Provocation was; which, he says, is sufficient to justify such a Conduct as his. In order to this I must first relate the Circumstances and Facts upon which the Dispute is grounded. On the 9th of November last, I was sent for to

visit a Gentleman, who, I was told, had taken Poison. When I went to him I found he had been Vomiting for some Time; and examining what he had thrown up, I found in the Bottom of the Basin, a Whitish Powder, which seemed to me, to be White *Arsenic*. I asked him what he had taken, and in what Quantity; but he refused to tell me; Upon which I directed that his Vomiting shou'd be encouraged, whilst there was Suspicion of any Poison remaining in his Stomach, and this, by means of warm weak Broth mixed with Oil. My Reason for continuing the Vomiting by this Means, was, that warm Broth mixed with Oil, was not only the most immediate Vomit, but likewise that, the Oil would in a great Measure, defend the Coats of the Stomach, from the Corrosion of the Poison. When by this Means, his Vomiting was kept up for several Hours, he having taken about two Flasks of Oil, with above seven Gallons of Broth, and finding nothing come up from his Stomach, but the Broth and Oil, I desired they should desist
from



from giving him any more : Concluding that none of the *Arsenic* could be in the Stomach, and if any of it remained in his Body it must have got into the small Guts; on which Account I directed an Ounce and a half of Glauber Salts to be given him; a *Purgative*, which I thought would soonest and in the safest way, operate. This Receipt was sent to the Apothecary. In the mean Time, Dr. *Westrop* came to see the Gentleman, and directed him, before the Salts were given, to take a Vomit of *Emetic Tartar*. Soon afterwards I saw the Patient, and was informed of what Dr. *Westrop* had done: Upon which I told those who were present, that the Prescription was from a Suspicion the Doctor must have had, that the Poison was not altogether out of his Stomach: But although I was under no such Suspicion; I saw no harm in giving the Vomit previous to the Salts, which accordingly was done. I then left him; but soon after was sent for to return, was told that Dr *Bonbonous* was there, and had utterly disapproved of giving the Salts, and desired
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me to come and Consult with him. When I came he told me *it was improper for the Patient to take Salts, as that would drive the Poison downwards; and that it rather ought to be expelled by Vomits.* There were present with us at this Time; Doctor Westrop, three Surgeons belonging to Regiments, and the Apothecary. I told Dr. Bonbonous that he had not sufficiently informed himself; for that the Patient had been kept in a continual State of Vomiting for about five Hours; that none of the Poison could possibly be supposed to remain in the Stomach; and if any of it was still in the Body, it must have got into the small Guts. I then asked him if he knew any other Method of carrying it from thence, than by Purgatives? He answered, *Yes, by Glysters.* I asked him if a Glyster could be drove up into the Duodenum! Upon which the other Gentlemen, spoke out, *that it was impossible as the Valve of the Colon would hinder a Glyster from getting up into the small Guts.* I then asked him what other Method he wou'd propose since this could

could not do? His Answer was, *well then let him take the Salts.* I then told him, it was very extraordinary in him, to condemn my Practice, before he had informed himself of it, and desired that he himself should go and acquaint the Patient, that the Salts were thought proper for him. However, the impossibility, that the Glysters should enter the small Guts, did not hinder Dr. *Bonbonous* from insisting that along with the Salts taken by the Mouth, he should have Glysters, with some Glauber Salts dissolved in each of them. Mr. *Shearer* accordingly gave the Patient five or six of these Glysters, and told me *that the Quantity of Salts sent for to the Apothecary's that Day, was intirely owing to the Quantity ordered in the different Glysters, & the Ignorance of a Servant in mixing some of them wrong, which occasioned their being thrown out.* *Vid. Certificate.*

Some Time after, I heard it reported in Town, that my Practice in Regard to the Gentleman, was very lyable to Censure, and that he must have died, had not Dr. *Bonbonous*, prevented his taking
what

what I had ordered. This surprised me much, I was not Conscious to myself of having done any Thing amiss. I could not imagine, that Physicians who went to examine what had been ordered for this Patient, at an Apothecary's Shop, would conclude, *That because the first Receipt which appeared there was for purging Salts; that therefore he had not been made to Vomit at all.* I was so far from seeing Reason to condemn what I had done, that I was confirmed in my Opinion, by Dr. Bonbonous agreeing to it, although he had at first been disposed to raise Objections. I concluded that this Story was so inconsistent with notorious Facts, that it must drop immediately, and that I had no Occasion to Trouble myself about it. But in this I was mistaken, for Calumny may live long in concealed Whispers and Insinuations, if it never accuses a Man to his Face, nor in the Presence of any Person who is like to bring Matters to a direct Examination. *My Enemies*, for I think I may now call them by that Name, did never acquaint me with the Particulars
of

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of their Charge, as knowing, that with this single Advantage, I could fully clear myself of these Aspersions. Their accusing me in my Absence only, gave them three Advantages. First, As Physicians, they must be supposed good Judges in the Particulars they accused me of, and none of their Hearers were Qualified to dispute this Matter with them. Secondly, they might, underhand, make what Impressions they pleased upon the Minds of their Acquaintance, without my Knowledge or having any opportunity to justify myself. And thirdly, what accusations were spread with this Air of concealment and reserve, few would be forward in acquainting me of, lest they should thereby incur the Displeasure of those who invented them. Thus they Lurked secure, stabbing me in my Character, with Confidence as they had often boasted, that they might soon force me to quit the Place. Many of my Friends gave me warning of this, and told me that my Enemys were endeavouring by now Scandalous means to blast my Reputation

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putation; but with all, I could not learn the Particulars of the Charge, that was brought against me, and all the Defence I could make, was to relate my Conduct, in those cases wherein I found myself accused, and the Answer generally made me, was, that my account of it, was very different from what was currently Reported. However I do not desire to advance any facts upon the Strength of my own Testimony, and have in this Paper named the Persons who were Witnesses to what Past in the Case of Mr. Knox.

On Sunday the eleventh Inst. I was in Company with a Gentleman, who introduced this Subject by telling me, *That I could not be ignorant, that several of the Physicians, were endeavouring to hurt my Character, by misrepresenting my Practice in the Cases of Mr. Barry and Mr. Knox.* He desired I wou'd draw up a State of both these Cases, which he might show to Sir John Freke: because in a Conversation he lately had with that Gentleman, he had desired him to suspend his Judgement, untill he should see him again, and did not
doubt

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doubt, but he would find my Behaviour in both Cases, had been very unfairly represented to him. I told him, that in both, I could defend myself before any College of Physicians. That in Mr. Barry's Case, the want of Success was not owing to me; that my Practice could not be blamed, where my Opinion was not followed; and that if a Patient rather chose Death, than to comply with the Prescriptions given him, he was only lyable to blame, and not his Physician. In the other Case, I was entirely at a loss, wherein I could possibly be blamed. I apprehended my Behaviour could not be misrepresented to Sir John Freke, by any other person than Dr. Farmer, and that applying to him, was the shortest way of discovering the particulars I was accused in. That Evening I met with Dr. Farmer, and told him I was credibly informed, he had often censured my practice in different Cases, particularly in those of Mr. Barry & Mr. Knox: and that it would have been fair in him to inquire into the true State of these matters before he gave any opinion to my prejudice. I laid be

fore him the Relation of Mr. *Knox's* case, as I have now repeated it, and asked him wherein he had found me to blame. He answered that *the Dose of Salts I had ordered was above six Ounces, which was a Dose not to be given.* I told him I was certain I had never ordered *such a Dose for any body*, and that if my Receipt was not since altered, it would plainly show what my Prescription had been. He answered, *that he would lay any Wager it was for above six Ounces.* I told him it was too serious an Affair, to leave to the wanton determination of a Wager: but that I would go immediatly to the Apothecarys, and call for the Receipt; I went accordingly to Mr. *Duponds*, and found the Receipt, as I had given it, *for an Ounce and half of Salts.* From this Conversation I had with Dr. *Farmer*, it is evident wherein the Charge brought against me Consisted; a Charge, which carries in it, the greatest Weakness and Improbability, and if I could have possibly apprehended such a ridiculous Charge, before Dr. *Farmer* told me of it, I wou'd have had the Receipt sooner, to produce in my own Vindication

cation. After I had been thus let into the
 Secret of my Accusation by the Doctor
 himself, there was no room to accuse any
 Person, of a *Breach of Honour or good
 manners*, in revealing a Charge which the
accuser himself had declared. So that
 when I afterwards met with the Gentle-
 man, who had before, in general apprifi-
 ed me of this affair, I told him, *that I
 had been with the Dr. and I repeated the
 Particulars of the above Conversation.*
 Upon which he said, *that as the Dr. had
 already explained himself to me, he had no
 occasion to be on the reserve any Longer,*
 and he accordingly told me *that what
 Dr. Farmer had accused me of, to Sr.
 John Freke, was, my ordering for Mr.
 Knox, such a Dose of Salts as no Man, the
 least knowing in Physick, had ever prescrib'd,*
 after this I never met with Dr. Farmer
 untill Wednesday the 21st. and I had then
 my Receipt in my Pocket to show him.
 He, in the mean time, had got a Letter
 from Mr. Dupond, affirming, *that the
 quantity of Salts sent to Mr. Knox in one
 Day amounted to five Ounces and an Half.*
 This Letter he shows to confirm his Af-
 firmation.

sertation, of my having ordered *a greater quantity to a single Dose*, than the whole that was sent on that Day *wou'd amount to*. Although it appears from Mr. *Du-ponds* Letter that *five Ounces and an half* were sent, it does not therefore appear that this Quantity was ordered by me for a *Dose*. or indeed ordered by me at all. If *Doctor Farmer* had enquired how that quantity was Disposed of, he wou'd have found, that an *Ounce and an half* only was given him by the Mouth, that part of the remaining four Ounces was wrong mixt by the mistake of a *Servant*, and therefore *thrown out*, and the *Remainder* given him in the *Glysters*. As in this Charge of *Dr. Farmer's*, I was singled out from the other Gentlemen who attended *Mr. Knox*, it must be for some Part of my *Conduct*, before they were called in; now, the only quantity of Salts I ordered *previous* to the Consultation, consisted of *an Ounce and an half*, so that I may very fairly conclude, the Doctors Assertions are, *as wide of Truth*, as *above six Ounces* are different from *one and an half*. Not having an Opportunity of seeing *Dr. Farmer*, and finding he still

peristed in his Charge, notwithstanding what had pass'd in the Conversation I had with him, I wrote him a Letter, the words of which, as far as I can recollect, are as follows :

S I R,

When I parted with you, I went to the Apothecary's, and found my Receipt to be unaltered, and instead of being for above six Ounces as you averred, it is only for an Ounce and an half, I asked Mr. Gillis, from whom you said, you had your Information; what he had told you, he answered me, that, he had mentioned no Quantity, only that I had directed Salts for him; so must conclude it to be a vile Story, forged by yourself. I want to know what Reparation you intend to make to me, for this villanous Attempt to ruin me. I wait your Answer.

PAT. BLAIR.

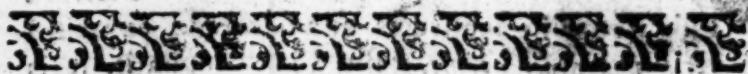
This Letter he constructs as a *Challenge*, expressed in very *ungenteel Terms*. But I insist upon it, it is neither a *Challenge*, nor are the *Terms* of the Letter, any way *inconsistent* with the *Usage* I received. A Man guilty of an Attempt to ruin another, by telling *Falshoods* of him, when he had Reason to believe the Truth lay otherwise; this Attempt, is in my Opinion agreeable to the common Notion of what is *Vile* or *Villanous*, and a Reparation for that, can never be made by *fighting*; for in that Case, the *World* is left quite in the *Dark*; as to who was *right* or *wrong*, in the Dispute; it is only known that they were both *Stubborn* enough to defend their *Affertions*, but a *Reparation* of an Injury can only be made, when the Person guilty of *Defaming* another, takes off the *Imputation* he has laid on the others

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Character, by *retracting* from what he formerly said, in the same *publick Manner*, he defamed him. After this I heard nothing of *Doctor Farmer*, until Wednesday following, when a Porter came to my House, whose name I am since informed is *Thomas Cotter*, he told the Maid Servant who went to the Door, that a *Master of a Ship was ill at the Blue Anchor, and desired my Attendance immediately*. The Porter desired he might deliver the Message himself, when the Servant told me this, as I did not know *then*, that any part of his Business was *to get acquainted with my Person and Dress*, I went to the Door, where he delivered me the same Message: But as what followed upon this is to be tryed in a judicial Way, I will say nothing of it now

PAT. BLAIR.

Corke, February, 28, 1749-50



WHEREAS there has been an unhappy Quarrel betwixt *Doctor Farmer* and *Doctor Blair*, concerning the Quantity of Salts ordered for *Mr. Knox*, and I being with *Mr. Knox* during the whole Day, wherein the Salts were said to be given him. Do hereby certify, that the only Salts ordered for *Mr. Knox* by *Doctor Blair* was an Quind and half, and what was brought to him afterward was either used in Glysters or thrown out by the Ignorance of the Servant.

ALEX. SHEANER

F I N I S.

